

KEADY INVESTIGATION.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 15 June 1835 *pro*,

COPY of the PROCEEDINGS had at an INVESTIGATION held in *Armagh*, of the Transactions which took place at *Keady*, in the County of *Armagh*, between the Magistrates, the Police and the Orangemen, on the 5th November last; with all the Documents connected therewith.

(True Copies).

Dublin Castle.

WILLIAM GOSSET.

My dear Sir,

Gosford Market-hill, 1 November 1834.

I HAVE just received the inclosed, which I think it right to forward to you. I shall attend to the matter, and as I have not time before post to send you a copy of the informations, will you have the goodness to return them to me when you have done with them.

There was a good deal of rioting at the *Armagh* races lately, and I believe this rumoured meeting may be connected with it, and party runs very high.

Believe me, &c.

The Right Hon. E. J. Littleton,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Gosford.*

Sir,

Keady, County *Armagh*, 1 Nov. 1834.

HAVING received information that a very large assembly of persons is to take place on the 5th instant, and having it also on oath, that if it takes place there will be great danger of the persons of the neighbourhood being disturbed, and from my own knowledge of the excited state of parties in this part of the country at this moment. I have, in conjunction with my brother magistrates, to request that a party of military may be ordered to attend here on that day, to preserve order as far as possible. We have caused the inclosed notice to be circulated as widely as possible.

I have, &c.

Sir William Gosset,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *James S. Blacker, J. P.*

NOTICE.

WHEREAS, we have received information on oath, that a large assemblage of persons is to take place in the neighbourhood of *Keady* on Wednesday next, the 5th of November, and that the same is likely to create terror in the minds of His Majesty's peaceable subjects, as well as a breach of the peace.

Now we, the undersigned magistrates, hereby caution all persons from so assembling, as we are determined (if necessary) most rigorously to enforce the law.

Keady Petty Sessions,
31 October 1834.

(signed) *James S. Blacker.*
Henry L. Prentice.
Francis Stringer.

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 2 November 1834.

HAVING received a communication from Lord Gosford, lieutenant of the county of Armagh, and also from Mr. Blacker, a magistrate of that county, stating that information has been made before the magistrates of the district of Keady, that a large assemblage of people is expected to take place there on the 5th instant; I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to request that you will give such instruction to the general commanding in that district, as shall enable him to place a sufficient military force at the disposal of the civil authorities.

It would be sufficient if you would direct the officer in command of the district, to put himself in communication with Lord Gosford and the magistrates who attend the Keady petty sessions.

Indeed, I have every reason to suppose that he has had a requisition from them, but the communications made to the Government leave that point rather doubtful.

I have informed Lord Gosford that I have made to you this communication by his Excellency's desire.

I have, &c.

Right Hon. Lieut. Gen. Sir H. Vivian, Bart. (signed) *E. J. Littleton.*
Commanding the Forces.

My dear Sir,

Gosford, 5 November 1834.

I SEND inclosed the report of the Keady magistrates, respecting what passed in that neighbourhood to-day. It does not appear that any violence was committed, which must, I think, be attributed to the precautions taken, and the steady and praiseworthy conduct of the magistrates.

Believe me, &c.

(signed) *Gosford.*

Some few wore orange sashes. I have heard of no meetings in other parts of the county.

The Right Hon. E. J. Littleton,
&c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

Keady, 5 November 1834.

Three o'clock, p.m.

AGREEABLE to our notice we assembled here to-day to preserve the peace, which we had sworn informations was threatened, as was previously reported to your Lordship. There was a large military force placed under our command, which though not called upon to act, was a great means of keeping order. About 11 o'clock we proceeded to the ground where the assemblage was to take place, and found from 400 to 500 persons assembled, about 100 with arms: after expostulating with them they agreed to disperse, and actually did so; when on leaving the ground they were met by another party with drums and flags. This caused a return. Mr. Blacker was obliged to read the Riot Act, and order the police to load. The persons carrying the flag and the drums being known, we made no arrests; (indeed one of the individuals is under bail to stand his trial at the next assizes, for walking in procession last 12th of July). The military are just returned to their quarters, but we have thought it advisable to keep the police here to-night, lest there might be any disturbance. On the whole we trust the day has passed over with as little disturbance as could be expected, and that our conduct will meet with your Lordship's approbation.

We have, &c.

(signed) *James S. Blacker.*
Henry L. Prentice.
Francis Stringer.

Earl of Gosford,
&c. &c. &c.

My dear Lord,

Dublin Castle, 6 November 1834.

I HAVE submitted to the Lord Lieutenant your letter of the 5th instant, conveying to me the letter of Mr. Blacker, Mr. Prentice and Mr. Stringer, detailing their proceedings at Keady.

I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to request that you will have the goodness to express to these magistrates the great satisfaction with which his Excellency has heard of their promptitude and judgment in preserving the peace of their district yesterday; and I have also, on his Excellency's part, to convey to your Lordship his best thanks for your attention on this occasion.

The principal parties concerned, and who can be identified as leaders, or as having carried arms or insignia, ought to be prosecuted, for which purpose the magistrates will, no doubt, not fail to take the necessary informations.

I remain, &c.

The Earl of Gosford,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *E. J. Littleton.*

Royal Hospital, 7 Nov. 1834.

THE Lieutenant-general, commanding, presents his compliments to Mr. Littleton, and has the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, a letter from Major Priestley, commanding the 25th depot, reporting the particulars of an Orange procession, which took place in the vicinity of Keady.

Sir,

Armagh, 5 Nov. 1834.

I HAVE the honour to report, that in pursuance of a route from Major-general Macdonell, commanding Northern District, I marched from Armagh early this morning with two companies of the depot, 25th Regiment, to Keady, a distance of eight English miles, for the purpose of aiding the civil power; there I was joined by a troop of the 10th Hussars, Captain Hayes, from Monaghan, and a company of the 25th depot, which had been halted there when on march to headquarters from Carrickmacross. I immediately communicated my arrival to the Rev. J. Blacker and another magistrate; and at 11 o'clock, A.M., the whole of the troops were called upon by Mr. Blacker, (a copy of whose requisition I have the honour to enclose,) and we immediately proceeded about two miles from Keady, accompanied by Mr. Stringer, when we were met by Mr. Prentice, who informed us that a party of armed Orangemen, with a cannon, music, &c. had assembled about a mile from us, but that he believed after they had fired one round they would disperse, as advised to do by Mr. Blacker. I suggested, that if it was not the intention of the magistrate to make the police (about 30 in number) seize their arms, &c. and to disperse them, it would be advisable to halt the troops out of sight, which was done. I rode forward about a mile with Mr. Prentice, leaving Mr. Stringer with the troops, and joined Mr. Blacker, who had induced the mob to retire. Soon after they had left the ground, two or three other hodies of men appeared on the high ground about a mile off, and they followed the example of the first party on our riding towards them, the greater part returning in the direction from which they had come. Shortly another party from near Keady, partly armed, and with a flag, drums, fifes, sashes, &c. approached the ground; these were stopped by the police magistrates; but they were very violent, crossed the ditches into the field with the colour, &c. and then cheered and fired for some time, which was answered by several distant hodies in a similar manner, although Mr. Blacker had read the Riot Act. At his request I went for the troops, but before I had quite returned to the ground with them, we were halted, the magistrates having permitted the Orangemen to pass us, in the direction of Keady. We followed them, (the rest having disappeared,) and found that they had left the flag, drum, &c. at a public-house about a mile from Keady, and had dispersed, having previously promised not to meet again to-day. When half a mile from Keady, on our return to that village, we were joined by Major-general Macdonell, and we again met a few armed men, when the magistrates ordered the police to stop; but after some time they permitted them to pass, taking down the names of several of them. We then returned about two

o'clock, P.M., to the public-house, and all being quiet, and the magistrates no longer requiring the military, the Hussars returned to Monaghan, and I brought the three companies, 25th depôt, to Armagh, neither party returning through Keady.

On our return we heard a firing in every direction, and occasionally drums and rifles.

Only about 300 Orangemen appeared *at the field* where the sham fight was to have taken place; many of them were *extremely* violent, but only about 100 were armed. The advice of the magistrates, the knowledge of the intended arrival of the military, and their actual presence, prevented, I understand, a much greater assemblage. The Armagh party marched about 20 English miles, and were absent 11 hours.

I have, &c.

(signed) *E. Priestley,*

Major, 25th Regiment, commanding Depôt.

The Military Secretary, &c. &c. &c.

Royal Hospital.

Depôt, 25th Regiment:—1 field officer, 1 captain, 6 subalterns, 3 sergeants, 2 drummers;—144 police;—1 captain, and troop 10th hussars;—police, about 30.

MEMORANDUM for Major *Priestley*.

Assistant Quartermaster-general's Office,
3 Nov. 1834.

BESIDES the two companies, 25th regiment ordered from Armagh to Keady, on the 5th inst.; the company from Carrickmacross is ordered to halt at Keady to-morrow, and remain there on the 5th inst.; also a troop of the 10th Hussars is ordered from Monaghan to Keady on the 5th inst., so as to arrive there by 10 o'clock in the morning.

(signed) *P. Bainbridge,* Lieut.-general,
A. Q. M. G.

To Major *Priestley*,
Commanding Depôt, 25th Regiment, Armagh.

Sir,

5 Nov. 1834.

I REQUEST you will turn out your party to aid the civil power, as soon as possible.

Yours, &c.

Officer commanding 25th Regiment, (signed) *James S. Blacker, J. P.*
and Troops at Keady.

My Lord,

Dublin Castle, 11 Nov. 1834.

I HAVE laid before the Lord Lieutenant your Lordship's various letters connected with the recent proceedings at Keady.

Although his Excellency is fully satisfied, that the magistrates did everything in their power to prevent the meeting, and to check it when it took place; the circumstances of the case are in some respects so extraordinary, that he thinks a formal investigation should take place, and that your opinion should be reported to the Government.

I am accordingly directed to request, that your Lordship will arrange some time and place for meeting the magistrates, and that you will inform the Inspector-general of the district of your intention, and summon him to attend for the purpose of giving his assistance.

It is important, that the Government should be informed not only of the number of the parties on the ground, and the extent to which they were armed, the use they made, or threatened to make of their arms, and their general deportment on the ground when summoned by the magistrates to disperse; but also what steps have since been taken for the purpose of arresting the leaders of the party.

party. If it be true, that a small piece of brass ordnance was brought to the ground, special means should be taken to arrest the individuals who conducted it.

It is not sufficiently explained, in any of the papers which have been forwarded for his Excellency's information, why the parties were not more summarily dispersed, or apprehended on the ground. I do not mean by this remark to express any suspicion that the magistrates did not exercise a sound discretion in that respect, but the reasons have not been sufficiently explained to the Government.

The Earl of Gosford,
&c. &c. &c.

I have, &c.
(signed) E. J. Littleton.

My dear Sir,

Gosford, 11 November 1834.

THE enclosed are in reply to my letter (a copy of which I sent to you) to the magistrates who attended at Keady on the 5th instant. I have not received an answer from Mr. Prentice, when I do I shall forward it to you; I have kept copies, as I think you may wish to keep these letters; they clearly show the spirit and determination of the Orangemen to resist the civil authority in its effort to enforce obedience to the law; on this ground, I am of opinion, that these documents should remain in your possession.

Believe me, &c.
(signed) Gosford.

The Right Hon. E. J. Littleton,
&c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

Tassagh, 10 November 1834.

It was arranged by Mr. Blacker and myself, on 5th November, that he should move on in advance some distance with the police, and that I should remain with the military until it might be found necessary, from the failure of the police, to require their aid. Mr. Prentice met Mr. Blacker at the place appointed by the Orangemen for their sham fight. I had no opportunity of seeing what occurred there between the magistrates and Orangemen, being at some distance with the military. The magistrates, I understand, remained some time expostulating with the Orangemen, when, from their obstinacy, it was considered necessary to read the Riot Act, and call upon me with the military under my charge. While moving quickly with the military to the place of rendezvous, I met a large armed body, with a curious constructed piece of ordnance mounted on five wheels, and on making arrangements to stop this party, I was told that Mr. Blacker and Mr. Prentice had given them permission to retire, and they were then on their return home. I did not hear any improper expression used by the Orangemen, but I have no hesitation in stating, that the police would have been quite insufficient to act without the aid of the military. There were but a few of the Orangemen decorated, and but one flag and one drum. I am sorry to observe, that this neighbourhood is at present, from the late transaction, in a very excited state, and abuse in abundance heaped upon the magistrates for the part they have been obliged to take in the discharge of their duty. We hold our petty sessions in Keady on Friday next, and shall then adopt such further proceedings as may be considered necessary.

I have, &c.
(signed) Francis Stringer.

Earl of Gosford,
&c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

Keady, 10 November 1834.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 9th instant, and, in reply to the different queries contained in it, have to state, that I was the magistrate who read the Riot Act, and gave orders to the police to load. I certainly did not hear the expressions you allude to used, or any other of the kind. I have heard the report of such being made, and caused the strictest inquiry to be made both among the police and others who were standing

by, but cannot trace any foundation for it. The expressions and manner of the Orangemen were certainly very strong, improper and irritating to the magistrates. There was a piece of ordnance on a clumsy sort of a carriage; but, to say the truth, I was too much occupied otherwise to pay much attention to it; it belongs, I understand to a near neighbour of my own.

There were a few amongst the Orangemen decorated with ribbons, besides a flag and drum (as already reported to your Lordships). I have caused two of them that I knew myself to be summoned for Friday next, last Friday being too severe a day for the bench to assemble. I have heard from some of the officers that were out with us that several of the guns fired were loaded with ball. As to resistance being made to the civil power, I for one am decidedly of opinion that, had we attempted to make any arrests, or, in short, to stop the intended proceedings on the 5th without the support of the military, blood would inevitably have been shed; and God only knows how matters might have ended. I think these are all the points your Lordship wished touched upon at present. I trust you believe I shall be ready at all times to give your Lordship, faithfully, such information as you may require, and the peace of this part of the country demands; it is a good deal exasperated at this moment, and I come in for no small share of blame for the part I took in the late business.

I have, &c.

Earl of Gosford,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *James S. Blacker.*

Sir,

Dublin Castle, 13 November 1834.

THE Lord Lieutenant having judged it necessary that an investigation should take place into the occurrences at Keady on the 5th instant, his Excellency desires that you will put yourself in communication with Lord Gosford, who has been requested by his Excellency to join the Keady magistrates for that purpose.

His Excellency requests that you will ascertain from his Lordship the time at which it will be convenient to him to enter on the inquiry; and that you will attend and aid his Lordship and the magistrates in the investigation, and sign the report.

I have, &c.

Sir F. Stovin,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *E. J. Littleton.*

My dear Sir,

Gosford, 15 November 1834.

I HAVE had no answer from Sir Frederick Stovin, so I conclude he was from home when my letter arrived; this may make it necessary to put off the investigation until Thursday or Friday next. I am inclined to think Armagh will be the best place to hold it. I have spoken to several on the subject, and all agree in this: many people would come to Armagh that would feel great reluctance in going to Keady, as I am informed. Could you promise for me the law officer's opinion on the points stated in the enclosed paper; it may be advisable to have this.

Believe, &c.

The Right Hon. E. J. Littleton,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Gosford.*

"Can persons who have been identified in a tumultuous assemblage of Orangemen (which assemblage was generally armed), carrying flags and other emblems, be indicted and punished as belonging to that assemblage, though they should not have carried arms in addition to such flag and other emblems?"

"Appearing in arms under the Riot Act, 27 Geo. 3, c. 95, is Felony—Death."

"The Crown Solicitor is requested to send down form of indictment under such circumstances as stated above."

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My dear Sir,

Gosford, 15 Nov. 1834.

I SEND the magistrates' report of what took place at Keady petty sessions yesterday. I confess I am surprised that more persons were not identified as being in the assemblage on the 5th.

The Right Hon. E. J. Littleton.

Yours, &c.

(signed) Gosford.

My Lord,

Keady Petty Sessions, 14 Nov. 1834.

AGREEABLE to your Lordship's letter of the 9th instant, all the police employed on the 5th instant, were in attendance here to-day, and sworn as to the identity of persons forming the procession on that day. Only one person could be identified by the police as wearing colours or marching in procession, and he is already under bail to appear at the next assizes for the same offence, on the 12th of July last. Another was identified by Mr. Blacker, as carrying a flag on that day. Informations have been taken against both individuals, and given in bail for their appearance at next assizes.

I have, &c.

(signed)

James S. Blacker.
James Jones.

Henry Prentice.
Francis Stringer.

Lord Gosford,
&c. &c. &c.

My dear Lord,

Dublin Castle, 17 November 1834.

IMMEDIATELY on receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, I submitted to the law adviser the paper containing points upon which information is required, arising from the late affair at Keady, and now about to undergo investigation. Mr. Greene observes, that if the character of the assembly be illegal, as by carrying flags or banners, or by other insignia bringing it within the prohibition of the Act of Parliament, he thinks any individual forming a part of it, and belonging to it, will be implicated in the consequences in point of law, although not found to have carried arms or flags, or to have displayed any unlawful ensign. He conceives that it is not necessary, in order to render the assembly unlawful, that arms should be carried in addition to flags, &c. He further adds, that if this be a meeting for the purpose of demonstrating any religious distinction, and if, at such meeting, any fire-arms, or any banners, emblems, flag or symbol be exhibited, the display of which is calculated to provoke animosity between the King's subjects, the assembly is a violation of the law.

Believe me, &c.

Earl of Gosford,
&c. &c. &c.

E. J. Littleton.

Sir,

Gosford, 24 January 1835.

ACCORDING to the directions received from the Marquis Wellesley, I proceeded to Armagh on the 25th November, having given previous notice thereof, and called on all persons capable of giving information, to communicate what facts might have come to their knowledge respecting what occurred at Keady on the 5th November; and I herewith inclose the depositions. They should have been transmitted earlier, had I not been occupied with the investigation of a subsequent transaction in the same neighbourhood. I think it right to call the attention of Government to the determined spirit of resistance which appears to have been manifested by the Orangemen on that day, and also to the necessity of adopting such measures as will prevent similar occurrences in future.

I have, &c.

(signed) Gosford.

Sir William Gosset,
&c. &c. &c.

AT an Investigation held in the Court House, Armagh, on Tuesday the 25th of November 1834, touching an assemblage at Keady in the County of Armagh, on 6th November, the following appeared on evidence :

George Stewart Hill, chief constable of police :—Remembers the day of the assemblage at Keady; attended there with 27 police; reported it to Mr. Blacker, and then to Mr. Stanger; went with Mr. Blacker to where the assemblage was gathering; Mr. B. addressed them to disperse and go home, and not to manifest a feeling; two men advised the rest to disperse, only desiring that two shots might be fired; does not know the men, saw them go through the crowd and reasoned with them; were aggressive, if allowed to fire one or two shots; remained so for some time and fired some shots. The understanding was between Mr. B. and the people that they were to disperse on firing the shots; they afterwards went off; police remained as they were; a party came back by the road, the others went away; Mr. B. stopped them, they had a banner with them. Dependent came up to them in double-quick time; came within about four perches of them; they halted as a crowd; does not know the man who carried the flag, did not hear him command them; Mr. B. ordered the police to load, and then, as he believes, read the Riot Act; the police loaded, but the men kept their position. Witness cautioned them to go home, as if blood was shed they would be accountable, and that if loyal would only do harm; they went into a field and fired shots there; did not see men, a flag there; thinks there were about 50 or 60 all armed; saw one man with an orange ribbon in his coat, and saw a man before that with a sash, and one with a white belt over his shoulder; thinks he only saw four men with colours; the white belt was a common pouch-belt; did not see any ammunition; saw a carriage with three wheels, a swivel carriage was attached with a skeleton cart; it was fired; it was on the first occasion it was fired; thinks there was ball-cartridge from the report of the guns; did not hear balls through the air; the arms were chiefly guns of different descriptions, from fowling-pieces to muskets, &c.; they had no belts on the guns like yeomanry guns; saw no distinguishing badges on first party, except a sash on one man; it was a red sash like a sergeant's sash; the flag was with the second party that scoured Mr. Blacker's horse, and then they furled it up; there were a good many men about the swivel gun; thinks the two men who first spoke to Mr. B. were at the gun; some at the gun were armed; thinks all were armed on the second occasion; when the Riot Act was read they seemed reluctant to disperse, but Mr. Prentice having went over to them, they did comply; did not appear willing to disperse on hearing the Riot Act read; they had changed into the field when shots were fired; they went in different directions; did not hear any person authorizing himself, as commander, although they fell into line; did not appear well dressed in line; witness was about 30 or 40 yards from them at the time; did not hear any word of command to fire; about 20 shots were fired at once, and other straggling shots; two men appeared known to the magistrates; did not know a man there; overtook a third party near the house of Campbell; could not say how many; thinks there might be 200, mostly all armed; the people who fired the volley went away to go home; thinks there were of the party at Campbell's, and who marched towards Keady; witness heard some shots fired near Keady; witness met a number of them, say about 20 or 30; did not fire; saw no person as leader, nor any command given; witness and his party and the military, put themselves together to stop them; from the time the second party was on the road to the time they fired in the field, might be about three or four minutes; two men are for trial at the assizes; witness's party state that they do not know any of the assemblage but the two men in custody; witness and his party are not long on that station, and was only about three or four times in pairs; thinks the second party did not take their position to oppose witness and party, but said they would have satisfaction for other party who fired in the morning; it was after the magistrate remonstrated with them that they went into the field and fired; thinks if the other party had not fired that they might have went away without firing; hears that a man who is to stand his trial at next assizes for a former offence, was one of the party; witness did not hear any understanding between the magistrates and the people.

John Rodgers, constable of police :—Went with Mr. Hill, and Mr. Blacker and party, on 5th of November instant; knew no man there in assemblage, only Robert Magwood; first saw a party of police go into subdivisions across the road, and Mr. B. read the Riot Act to the party, and after firing some shots went away; some were in rear of the party of police, and witness and party would not let them pass; heard persons speak loudly to magistrates, had no insignia; did not know what he said, but thinks it was insulting; he stamped his foot; it was after that they went into the meadow and fired; saw a number of arms, but very few orange ribbons or insignia; saw them prime and load; did not hear them commanded; it was after the police got orders to prime and load that they primed and loaded; heard a person among the body say that they could prime and load as well as them, the police; it was after the Riot Act was read that the party fired; could not tell what they loaded with; did not see the man who said he could prime and load as well as them; there were long guns and short guns; thinks there were more long than short; saw no belts or pouches; did not go very orderly from road to field, but when they left the meadow they formed up very well; saw no person act as leader; they dispersed a few minutes after the Riot Act was read; marched off in order, thinks two deep, as if to go home; thinks if police had went to seize on them after they loaded, that some of the party might have been foolish enough to resist, that is, if witness and his party had went to take their arms; from what

what he has heard since the transaction, thought at the time that they loaded to prepare against the police; it was the second party that he speaks of; heard no bad language towards police or magistrates; only the man he has mentioned; heard them say they commemorated the 5th November often before, and intended to do so; saw women and children convenient to them; thinks there were some in the meadow with party; saw amongst the crowd some who had arms on the road and in the meadow; does not know, but thinks bullets were fired; did not hear firing of any balls; witness gave evidence at Keady petty sessions, against the only two men he could identify.

Rev. James S. Blacker—Is a magistrate at Keady; on 5th November he went with police to the party; rode with Mr. Hill; were no persons assembled at place, but went and there met them; witness cautioned them to disperse, and Mr. Prentice did also, and said he was their agent; that was the first party; they said, if you allow us to fire a volley, they would go off, but without any liberty, in a few minutes they did fire; police were distant; fired without permission and then went off, and passed the position where the police were; they gave no resistance, that party, but went off as if to go home; witness was going off home; heard drums and fife playing, and perceived a party; witness rode up to them and remonstrated with them, which was not received well, as some said they would go on; witness's horse and self were thrown into the ditch with men who had the colours; thinks it was the waving of flags scared the horse; knows the man who carried the flag; first was Magwood, and Potts secondly. Informations are against them; the party were armed with guns; Magwood had a sword drawn; did not hear him give command; the arms were old firelocks and other better guns; thinks from their insulting language, they were disposed not to obey; said he had joined O'Connell; some said they would go over to him. Witness brought up police, and said they should not pass, and then read the Riot Act; then ordered police to prime and load; they went off to the left to a meadow, and then fired; did not see them load; heard no word of command given; were more than one shot; thinks they were loaded coming up and going into the field; saw women and children with them; saw only one with badge, except the flag; they said they thought it was not illegal, as they said they met in other places; did not take the music from them, as, knowing some of them, a row might have taken place if he attempted to take the music, or put the law in force; and blood would have been shed if law put in force; and knowing the man; he knew two men; thinks the men came from surrounding districts, from near Killylea and other places, as they appeared strangers; the magistrates had some time before issued a cautionary notice; thinks he would be justified in making an arrest outside of 15 minutes; is satisfied that if he attempted to arrest any of the party, resistance would have been made.

Henry L. Prentice, Esq.—Is a magistrate at Caledon; was at Keady, on 5th November inst.; acted as a magistrate; went to Keady in consequence of a note from Lord Gosford; was at Ravenhill; saw Mr. Blacker and police there, and a party of people in a meadow; thinks the police were about 60 yards from the party; they had old guns, &c.; the men were drawn up in line in ordered arms; witness joined Mr. Blacker, and spoke to the men with flags and colours; said they would go off if allowed to fire a volley; witness thought better not to bring the military for a few minutes, and on witness coming back near to the party, saw them going off towards Keady; men with arms were in line, and others were with them; they had no music; witness believes they went home; witness did not hear balls fired at that time, but did afterwards as he believes; saw a brass cannon drawn by a horse, and a party of people about it; thinks those at the cannon had not arms; when witness and officers were coming up, saw party go off; the first party appeared willing to comply with orders. Secondly, a party came down, and Mr. Blacker put the police in line to stop them; they then fired the flag, and when stopped went over into a field, and having fired, went off, and went to the road; left the meadows well as they could, but got in order on the road; did not see them prime and load; there was order observed in firing; witness told them he considered it very unwise and foolish, and cautioned them; they said other parties had met in other parts of the county; thinks they meant those to commemorate; witness thought it a doubtful point to commence taking their arms; would have thought it unwise, dressing resistance; and that if men had been marched with their arms, they might have complied; but if it had been attempted to disarm them, that resistance and bloodshed would have occurred; thinks that with the police force he might have succeeded in beating off the men, and from resistance lives might have been lost; the first party dispersed before military were in view; thinks if military and police had attempted to enforce the law, resistance would have been made, and bloodshed would have ensued if arms were to be taken; thinks there were ball cartridge there; cannot say the reason of bringing it there; heard since that persons had fired at a mark; thinks they would have marched into Armagh with military and police, because that they offered up the flag; said that they had been badly treated, as they were always willing to help the civil power; that they would give up such things; cannot say that they would have dispersed for witness or other magistrates, if military and police were not there; but certainly saw them very respectful to the remonstrance, as they soon went off; did not hear of any violence through some day; they went home but not in the way they should have done, as they got the music and went in order; they lodged the flag and drum in a house, and went off somewhere from Keady; could identify a number of lookers on, but none with arms, only the two persons in custody; might have seen 400 or 500 through the day; might be about 200 guns and pistols; believes the cannon was fired, but did not see it; there were many there who took no part;

the cannon was a swivel; saw no person take authority by way of command. Magwood had a sword, but saw no other; they stated it was for amusement, and not to insult anybody; witness thought it was contrary to law; issued their notice upon information to stop the assemblage.

Mr. Coleman showed a letter of information to the Petty Sessions, upon which notices were circulated.

Francis Springer, Esq. a magistrate:—Did not see the whole proceeding, as he remained with the military, and could not see what happened; he had received orders to go forward with the military, but was stopped on hearing that the party went off; witness met the party with the military, and was about to stop them, when he saw the magistrates and police behind; when witness was called on to bring up the military, was by a policeman, mounted; appeared as going home; heard shots fired through the day; witness did not say anything to them, as he heard of their being on their way home; if he had not heard so, he would have stopped them; cannot say whether he could have effected the purposes of the law or not; but first had arranged to remonstrate with them.

Samuel Leslie:—Was going on business, and saw a party of people coming down from Keady; saw police, and witness stopped with police; a second party came up, and police remained all the time; saw Mr. Blocker and police; some of the people went over into a field; a man with a flag went first, and then they gathered in the field and fired; had arms; fired a volley or two; arms generally were guns and muskets; saw no person in command; knew some of the persons there; witness was not at Keady; witness says Robert Maxwell was with the first party; had no arms or emblems as he could see; Maxwell was walking on the road with the party behind the swivel gun; was one of the party; heard shots fired first and second; saw no person in command; thinks that if ball cartridge was there, it might have been to defend them against an opposing party, but not the King's troops; did not see any other party opposite; witness cannot say he heard of any party assembling at Crieskeerna; witness knew of no notices being issued; thinks second party fired with ball; fired ball into the air; it was supposed they met as a sham battle, but it is not usual to bring balls to the like; cannot say why they had balls; there was a report that they would be opposed; did hear the Ribbon-men were coming to oppose them; it was a common report; but did not hear from the county of Monaghan; heard some say they would be prepared to meet them; the Orangemen have usually met in procession on the 5th November, but no sham fights near Keady till this one; heard of them in other places, but did not hear of balls being used; saw no resistance with the civil power; heard no reason assigned why a sham fight was had instead of procession, but said it was that way they were going to celebrate it.

Major-General M'Donagh:—Went to Keady to meet with military on the 5th inst.; was going to the ground where assemblage was to meet; before going forward met a party with arms; a man who appeared having the command ordered to "carry arms;" had no music; saw a man with each and all—

A portion were armed and a portion unarmed; heard shots fired near Keady where party were going towards; thinks some balls were fired; men were armed with muskets and other guns; a man did appear in command.

John Hughes, sworn:—Was at Ravenhill on the 5th instant; saw an assemblage walking with arms, some had orange colours; marched with fife and drum, in order; knows some who marched in order but had not colours; thinks about eight or twelve had colours; thinks about 100 had guns; they beat music into Keady with fife and drum past Campbell's Corner; thinks it was after 12 o'clock.

Michael Davley, sworn; said he was near Keady on the 5th instant; saw a party of people; it was going on the ground, when the first party was leaving the place going towards Keady, between twelve and one o'clock, as he thinks; they had arms; went the length of Thomas Campbell's; witness came before them to Campbell's Corner; cannot say they had a drum and fife when they passed Campbell's Corner, but believes they had.

Josiah Kidd:—Lives in Keady; was not out of Keady on the 5th instant, as he believes; saw an armed party returning to Keady, walking in order; had firelocks; thinks no music; thinks that they could not march into Keady without his knowledge; knew numbers of them, but could not identify any of them; thinks he knew all but about 10; there might be 50; knew Magwood, in front, with a white belt; he might be in command, as he was in front.

Terence Hagan:—Lives near Ravenhill, parish of Derrynoose; lodged examinations before the magistrates at Keady previous to the meeting; dreaded a breach of the peace, having heard threats on both sides, and that was partly the occasion of his going, because his premises were near the ground; he was afraid of it being injured; never heard of a sham fight before in the place, cannot tell their ends, only it being gunpowder-plot; heard the other party intended to resist; saw men with firelocks, but did not go near them; saw Mr. Blocker in conversation with an aged man, who said, "Only for him he would not be there;" saw a notice with Mr. Blocker in Armagh.

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READY INVESTIGATION.

COPY of PROCEEDINGS had at an INVITATION
held in dress of the Transactions which took
place at Kew, in the County of Surrey.

(Mr. Dobble.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
6 July 1816.
